GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:346
ANSWERED ON:21.03.2001
SHORTAGE OF EDIBLE OILS
JAIBHAN SINGH PAWAIYA;VIJAY KUMAR KHANDELWAL

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is acute shortage of edible oils in the country due to decrease in the production of oilseeds resulting in increase in its prices;

(b) if so, the total production of oilseeds as compared to the target set in this regard during the year 200-01, State-wise;

(c) the reasons for decrease in the production of oilseeds and increase in its prices; and

(d) the specific measures proposed to be taken to become self-reliant in the production of oilseeds?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR)

(a) to (d) : A statement is laid on the Table of the Sabha.

THE STATEMENT REFFERED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 346 DUE FOR REPLY ON 21.03.2001.

(a): No, Sir. The production of oilseeds/edible oils has been fluctuating on year to year basis and depends upon the weather conditions. There is a gap between demand and supply. The gap is being met through import in order to make edible oils available to the consumers at reasonable prices. There has been no increase in the prices of oilseeds and edible oils in the current and the last year.

(b): A target of 270.00 lakh tonnes was fixed by the Planning Commission for the production of oilseeds during the year 2000-2001. The total production of oilseeds for 2000-2001 is not available as the current oilseeds Rabi Season is not yet over and the Rabi Season crops are still standing in the fields.

(c): Oilseeds are grown mostly under rainfed conditions by small & marginal farmers and are vulnerable to vagaries of weather and various pests and diseases resulting in low production. Moreover due to drought situation prevailing in major oilseeds growing States in the country during the last 2 years i.e. 1999-2000 and 2000-2001, the production of oilseeds has declined to some extent. There has been no increase in its prices in the current year, on the other hand the prices in the domestic market have declined. This is due to the fact that there has been heavy cheap import of various categories of oil in the last two years.

(d): In order to make the country self reliant in the production of oilseeds/edible oils, the Technology Mission on Oilseeds (TMO) was set up in 1986. The Mission has launched a centrally sponsored Oilseeds Production Programme (OPP) to increase the production and the productivity of oilseeds in the country. Under the scheme financial assistance is provided on various inputs like production and distribution of seed, distribution of seed minikits, distribution of improved farm implements, sprinkler sets, rhizobium culture and PSB/micro nutrients etc. In order to disseminate the production technology amongst farmers, frontline demonstrations are organized by the I.C.A.R. Besides, block and integrated pest management demonstrations are organized through State Department of Agriculture. A new component of crash programme for quality seed production of groundnut and soybean has also been introduced during the Ninth Plan. In order to meet the demand of seed during natural calamities, a seed bank programme has also been introduced during the Ninth Plan.